

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A fuel dispensing station comprising:

at least one fuel dispenser;

an ignition source detector operable to directly detect an ignition source and,
in response to detecting an unwanted ignition source, transmit for generating and transmitting
a detection signal indicating the presence of ~~an~~ the unwanted ignition source; and

a control unit which receives said detection signal and ~~generates~~ transmits a
control signal ~~for output~~ to said fuel dispenser, wherein said fuel dispenser responds to said
control signal by inhibiting the dispensing of fuel.

2. (Currently Amended) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, further
comprising:

a fuel-management unit and at least one communicator, wherein said detection
signal output by said ignition source detector is received by a fuel-management unit, the fuel-
management unit outputting an information signal to the communicator to inform users that
fuel dispensing has been suspended.

3. (Original) The fuel dispensing station of claim 2, wherein said fuel dispenser
includes said control unit therein, and wherein said detection signal generated when said
ignition source is detected is transmitted to said control unit via said fuel-management unit.

4. (Currently Amended) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said ignition source detector is provided on a canopy over said fuel dispensing station.

5. (Currently Amended) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said ignition source detector is provided on a dispenser housing of said fuel dispenser.

6. (Currently Amended) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said ignition source detector is provided internally within said fuel dispenser.

7. (Currently Amended) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said ignition source detector is provided on a fuel nozzle.

8. (Original) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said unwanted ignition source comprises a spark, an open flame, or embers.

9. (Original) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said fuel dispenser responds to said control signal by temporarily suspending fuel supply.

10. (Original) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein at least one communicator outputs signals by means of light, sound or both.

11. (Original) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said source detector is an Infrared (IR) detector.

12. (Original) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, wherein said source detector is an electromagnetic spectrum detector.

13. (Currently Amended) A fuel dispensing station comprising:

at least one fuel dispenser;

an ignition source detector ~~provided internally~~ within said fuel dispenser and
operable to directly detect an ignition source and, in response to detecting an unwanted
ignition source, transmit for generating a detection signal indicating ~~an~~ the unwanted ignition
source;

a fuel-management unit for transmitting said detection signal detected by said
source detector to at least one communicator; and

a control unit which receives said detection signal and generates a control
signal for output to said fuel dispenser, wherein said fuel dispenser responds to said control
signal by inhibiting the dispensing of fuel.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for preventing unintended ignition in a fuel dispensing environment comprising the steps of:

directly detecting an ignition source;
communicating the detection of an ignition source to at least one of a customer, an onsite personnel, and an offsite personnel; and
suspending the delivery of fuel in reaction to the detection of the ignition source.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14 wherein the detecting includes detecting at least one of a spark, an ember, ~~and~~ or a flame.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the communicating includes the use of light or sound.

17. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the suspending includes suspending operation of pumps in the dispensing environment.

18. (Original) The method of claim 14 further including the steps of:
detecting the absence of an ignition source; and
resuming the delivery of fuel in reaction to the detection of the absence of an ignition source.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14 further comprising the steps of:
detecting the absence of an ignition source;
communicating the absence of an ignition source to at least one of a customer, an onsite personnel, and an offsite personnel; and
allowing ~~the~~ a resumption of fuel dispensing if requested by at least ~~on~~ one of a customer, an onsite personnel, ~~and~~ or an offsite personnel.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of allowing resumption of fuel dispensing only upon request by onsite personnel.

21. (Original) The method of claim 14 further comprising the steps of:
generating a detection signal upon detecting an ignition source;
transmitting the detection signal to a control unit;
generating a control signal in reaction to receipt of the detection signal at the control unit; and
transmitting the control signal to at least one of a communicator and a fuel delivery system.

22. (Currently Amended) A system for dispensing fuel comprising:
an ignition source detector operable to directly detect an ignition source and transmit ~~which generates and transmits~~ a detection signal upon detecting at least one of a spark, an ember and a flame;
a fuel dispenser for delivery of fuel into containers or vehicles;
a communicator for communicating with either sound or light to at least one of a customer in the vicinity of the fuel dispenser, an onsite personnel, and an offsite personnel; and
a control unit operably connected with the ignition source detector, fuel dispenser, and communicator and adapted to receive the detection signal transmitted by the ignition source detector and in reaction to the detection signal ~~generate and~~ transmit at least one control signal;
wherein the fuel dispenser receives the control signal and suspends the delivery of fuel and the communicator receives the control signal and communicates the detection of an ignition source.

23. (New) The fuel dispensing station of claim 1, the controller unit further operable to detect an absence of an ignition source and, in response to the absence, automatically transmit a command to the at least one fuel dispenser to resume the delivery of fuel.

24. (New) The fuel dispensing station of claim 13, wherein said unwanted ignition source comprises a spark, an open flame, or embers.

25. (New) The fuel dispensing station of claim 13, wherein said source detector is an Infrared (IR) detector.

26. (New) The fuel dispensing station of claim 13, the controller unit further operable to detect an absence of an ignition source and, in response to the absence, automatically transmit a command to the at least one fuel dispenser to resume the delivery of fuel.